



February 2004
Monthly Report

Water Lines

SDW Hotline Report

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Top Ten Topics

Topic	Questions (phone & e-mail)	Percent of Total* Questions
Local Drinking Water Quality	215	12
Tap Water Testing	189**	11
Lead	115	7
Household Wells	91	5
Home Water Treatment Units	83	5
Safe Drinking Water Act	69	4
Consumer Confidence Reports	60	3
MCL List	59	3
Other EPA	56	3
Complaints About PWSs	55	3

*A total of 1,745 questions were answered by the Hotline (via telephone and e-mail) in February 2004.

**Citizens who obtain their drinking water from private household wells asked 10 percent of the tap water testing questions.

Calls	E-mails	Total***
1,048	273	1,321

***A single call or e-mail may generate multiple questions.

Published Monthly

See past reports at

<http://intranet.epa.gov/ow/hotline>

Safe Drinking Water Hotline: National
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Operated by Booz Allen Hamilton
Under Contract #GS-10F-0090J

What's New

Calendar:

Who?	What?	Where?	When?
NDWA	Formation of a Water Security Working Group	Washington, DC	2/10/2004
NDWA	CCL Work Group	Washington, DC	3/4/2004 – 3/5/2004
ASDWA	Member Meeting	Alexandria, VA	3/17/2004 – 3/19/2004
EPA	Stage 1 DBP Training	Satellite Broadcast	3/18/2004
GWPC	Annual Policy Conference	Washington, DC	3/21/2004 – 3/23/2004

Monthly Trends

Recent tap water sampling conducted by the District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority (DC WASA) indicated levels of lead above the federal action level of 0.015 mg/L (90th percentile) in many of the homes served by DC WASA. The Safe Drinking Water Hotline noticed a surge in the proportion of lead related questions from DC callers. Approximately 60 percent of the lead related questions received in the month of February were from DC callers. In comparison, the percentage of lead related questions from DC callers in January 2004 and December 2003 were 3 percent and 17 percent, respectively. Lead related questions from DC callers centered on three main topics: lead testing of drinking water, home water treatment units that can remove lead, and whether or not the caller is served by a lead service line. EPA's Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water and EPA Region 3 have taken steps to address these questions as well as others from residents of DC. EPA produced a fact sheet containing information specifically for residents of DC who may have concerns about lead in drinking water. The fact sheet contains information on how EPA is addressing this issue, how to have water tested, special precautions that should be taken, and contact information for concerned customers of DC WASA. The fact sheet is available online at www.epa.gov/region03/leaddc.htm.

Did You Know?

Ground Water Awareness Week is March 14-20, 2004. The observance is designed to raise public awareness and appreciation of ground water resources and the professionals who work with ground water. More information is available at www.epa.gov/safewater/protect/upcoming.html

Frequently Asked Qs & As

This section provides answers to frequently asked questions not necessarily represented in one of the Top Ten Topic categories.

Q: What are the health effects associated with barium in drinking water?

A: EPA has found barium to potentially cause gastrointestinal disturbances and muscular weakness when people are exposed to it at levels above the maximum contaminant level (MCL) of 2 ppm for relatively short periods of time. In addition, barium has the potential to cause high blood pressure from a lifetime exposure at levels above the MCL. Additional information on barium can be found at www.epa.gov/safewater/contaminants/dw_contamfs/barium.html.

Q: How can citizens and the public get involved in issues related to the Safe Drinking Water Act?

A: EPA, states, and public water systems each work to protect your drinking water supply while providing opportunities for public involvement. At the federal level, citizens can attend public EPA meetings and provide comment on proposed regulations. Within each state, public input is required when determining the use of money from the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund. Citizens can also participate in state source water protection advisory committees, and in the development of strategies to ensure that water systems have adequate capability to provide safe drinking water to customers. At the local level, annual consumer confidence reports assist in creating a dialogue between a water supplier and its customers. In addition, citizens can assist local governments and water suppliers create and update an inventory of potential pollution threats to drinking water sources (*It's Your Drinking Water: Get to Know It and Protect It*, EPA810-K-99-002, May 1999).

More information about involvement in drinking water issues, including a list of public meetings and regulations that are open for comment, is available at www.epa.gov/safewater/pubinput.html.

Q: Does the Safe Drinking Water Act require EPA to analyze the costs and benefits of proposed regulations?

A: The 1996 Safe Drinking Water Act Amendments require EPA to publish a cost-benefit analysis whenever they propose a national primary drinking water regulation. In revising the Act, Congress recognized the need for more effective prioritization of drinking water regulations and the evaluation of small community water supply compliance costs. More information about economic considerations for setting drinking water standards is available at www.epa.gov/safewater/economic.html.

Q: I am concerned about cadmium in my drinking water. How can cadmium be released into the environment?

A: Cadmium occurs naturally in zinc, lead, copper and other ores that can serve as sources to ground and surface waters, especially when in contact with soft, acidic waters. Major industrial releases of cadmium are due to waste streams and leaching of landfills, and from a variety of operations that involve cadmium or zinc. In particular, cadmium can be released to drinking water from the corrosion of some galvanized plumbing and water main pipe materials. From 1987 to 1993, according to EPA's Toxic Chemical Release Inventory, cadmium releases were primarily from zinc, lead, and copper smelting and refining industries. Additional information on cadmium can be found at www.epa.gov/safewater/contaminants/dw_contamfs/cadmium.html.

Q: A community water system (CWS) completed the Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR) List 1 monitoring. Does this CWS need to monitor for List 3 contaminants?

A: Monitoring of List 3 contaminants will be performed only after future rulemaking specifies methods. List 3 contaminants, including seven microorganisms known to have health effects and two radionuclides, have methods in an early stage of development (*Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule Fact Sheet*, EPA815-F-01-008, April 2001).

Q: Does the Stage 1 Disinfectant and Disinfection Byproducts Rule (Stage 1 DBP) apply to ground water systems?

A: The Stage 1 DBP applies to all CWSs and NTCWSs that use a disinfectant to treat the water, as well as TNCWSs that use chlorine dioxide. Systems serving less than 10,000 persons and all ground water systems that use a disinfectant must comply with the Stage 1 Rule beginning January 1, 2004 (*Stage 1 Disinfectants and Disinfection Byproducts Rule: A Quick Reference Guide*, EPA816-F-01-010, May 2001).

Q: We are about to submit our completed vulnerability assessment but we are concerned about the public having access to the information in the assessment. Who will have access to the assessment?

A: Only EPA and individuals designated by EPA may have access to the copies of the assessments. No copy of an assessment, or part of an assessment, or information contained in or derived from an assessment shall be available to anyone other than an individual designated by EPA (SDWA 1433(a)(5)). EPA is required to develop protocols to protect the copies of the vulnerability assessments (and the information contained therein) submitted under the requirements of Title IV of the Public Health Security and Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Act of 2002 from unauthorized disclosure. Along with designation of access by EPA, the protocols shall ensure that each assessment, and all

information contained in or derived from the assessment, is kept in a secure location.

Q: Do I have to provide a copy of my vulnerability assessment to state or local agencies?

A: Pursuant to Section 1433(a)(4) of the Safe Drinking Water Act, "no community water system will be required under State or local law to provide an assessment described in Title IV of the Public Health Security and Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Act of 2002 to any State, regional, or local governmental entity solely by reason that the system submit such an assessment to EPA."

Q: Why did EPA establish maximum residual disinfectant level goals (MRDLGs) for disinfectants rather than maximum contaminant level goals (MCLGs)?

A: The MRDLG concept was introduced for disinfectants to reflect the fact that these substances have beneficial disinfection properties. As with MCLGs, MRDLGs are established at the level at which no known or anticipated adverse effects on the health of persons occur and which allows an adequate margin of safety. By using the term "residual disinfectant" in lieu of "contaminant", EPA intends to avoid situations in which treatment plant operators are reluctant to apply disinfectant dosages above the MRDLG during short periods of time to control for microbial risk (63 *FR* 69389, 69398; December 16, 1998).

Monthly Summary of Hotline Service

Total number of calls answered	1,048
Total number of e-mails received	273
Average wait time (in seconds)	0:46
Percent of calls satisfied immediately	99.9%
Percent of all calls answered in < 1 min	80.4%
Percent of callbacks answered in 5 days	100%
Percent of e-mails answered in 5 days	100%
Number of times callers were transferred to the WSC WellCare Hotline	233
Number of times callers listened to recorded message about CCRs	191
Number of times callers listened to recorded message about local drinking water quality for PWS customers	237
Number of times callers listened to recorded message about tap water testing and quality for household well owners	186
Number of times callers listened to recorded message about tap water testing for PWS customers	368

Comparison to Previous Year

	Calls	E-mails
February 2004	1,048	273
February 2003	1,516	301

Top Ten Referrals

Inquiry Referred to:	Number of Referrals	Percent of Total* Referrals
1. EPA Internet	172	16
2. State Lab Certification	170	16
3. Local Water Systems	161	15
4. State PWSS	148	14
5. NSF/WQA/UL	88	8
6. AGWT/WSC	52	5
7. EPA Regions	38	3
8. Other Hotlines	38	3
9. SDWIS/dwinfo.htm	28	3
10. Other	27	2

*A total of 1,089 referrals to other resources, agencies, and organizations were provided by the Hotline in February 2004.

Customer Profiles

Customer	Calls	E-mails
Analytical Laboratories	17	5
Citizen - Private Well	75	36
Citizen - PWS	575	125
Consultants/Industry/Trade (DW)	81	7
Consultants/Industry/Trade (Other)	65	35
Environmental Groups	3	0
EPA	9	3
Other Federal Agency	7	5
Government, Local	12	2
Government, State	19	6
Government, Tribal	2	0
Spanish Speaking	5	0
International	4	12
Media	1	0
Medical Professional	7	1
Public Water System	87	9
Schools/University	42	25
Other	37	2
TOTALS	1,048	273

Daily Call Data

	Total Calls Answered	Average Wait Time mm:sec
2-February	73	00:45
3-February	50	00:52
4-February	45	00:21
5-February	62	00:46
6-February	45	01:06
9-February	50	00:33
10-February	59	01:03
11-February	60	00:57
12-February	59	00:48
13-February	56	01:03
17-February	67	00:58
18-February	53	00:32
19-February	43	00:25
20-February	43	01:10
23-February	62	01:19
24-February	64	00:26
25-February	66	00:38
26-February	50	00:12
27-February	41	00:16
TOTALS	1,048	00:46

Topic Categories

Category	Calls	E-mails
Microbials/Disinfection Byproducts		
Chlorine	18	6
Coliforms	43	7
Cryptosporidium	12	1
Disinfection/Disinfection Byproducts (Other)	27	2
Disinfection – Home Water	7	3
Other Microbials	12	1
Storage – Home Water	1	1
Surface Water Treatment (SWTR, ESWTR, LT1FBR)	28	3
Trihalomethane (THM)	9	4
Inorganic Chemicals (IOC)/Synthetic Organic Chemicals (SOC)		
Arsenic	15	6
Fluoride	8	4
Methyl- <i>tertiary</i> -butyl-ether (MTBE)	9	0
Perchlorate	3	0
Phase I, II & V	14	1
Sodium Monitoring	0	0
Sulfate	1	0
Lead and Copper		
Copper	3	2
Lead	102	13
Lead Contamination Control Act (LCCA)/Lead Ban	5	1
Radionuclides		
Radionuclides (Other)	17	3
Radionuclides (Radon)	30	6
Secondary DW Regulations		
Secondary DW Regulations	25	5
SDWA Background/Overview		
Definitions & Applicability	9	4
MCL List	49	10
Other Background	27	12
SDWA	62	7

Category	Calls	E-mails
Water on Tap	9	1
Other DW Regulations		
Analytical Methods (DW)	27	10
Contaminant Candidate List/ Drinking Water Priority List	4	0
Consumer Confidence Report (DW)	58	2
DW Primacy (PWS)	0	0
Operator (PWS) Certification	2	3
Other Drinking Water Security	29	10
Public Notification (PWS)	34	0
Security Planning Grants	10	1
State Revolving Fund (DW)	7	3
Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR)	16	0
Other Drinking Water		
Additives Program	2	3
Bottled Water	30	7
Complaints about PWS	35	20
Compliance & Enforcement (PWS)	9	9
Home Water Treatment Units	63	20
Infrastructure/Cap. Development	11	3
Local DW Quality	166	49
Tap Water Testing	172	17
Treatment/BATs (DW)	5	3
Drinking Water Source Protection		
Ground Water Rule	9	1
Sole Source Aquifer	0	0
Source Water/Wellhead Protection	23	5
UIC Program	11	0
Out of Purview		
Household Wells	56	35
Non-Environmental	22	5
Non-EPA Environmental	17	17
Other EPA (Programs)	37	19
TOTALS	1,400	345

EPA DISCLAIMER

Answers to questions in the Safe Drinking Water Hotline monthly report are intended to be purely informational and are based on SDWA provisions, EPA regulations, guidance, and established policy effective at the time of publication. The answers given reflect EPA staff's best judgment at the time and do not represent a final or official EPA interpretation. This report does not substitute for the applicable provisions of statutes and regulations, guidance, etc., nor is it a regulation itself. Thus, it does not impose legally -binding requirements on EPA, States, or the regulated community. An answer to a question in this report may be revised at any time to reflect EPA's revisions to existing regulations, changes in EPA's approach to interpreting its regulations or statutory authority, or for other reasons. EPA may provide a different answer to a question in this report in the future.

Also, an answer provided in this report may not apply to a particular situation based upon the circumstances. Any decisions regarding a particular case will be made based on the applicable statutes and regulations. Therefore, interested parties are free to raise questions and objections about the appropriateness of the application of an answer in this report to a particular situation, and EPA will consider whether or not the recommendations or interpretations in the answer are accurate and appropriate in that situation. The information in this report is not intended, nor can it be relied upon, to create any rights enforceable by any party in litigation with the United States.

SAFE DRINKING WATER HOTLINE MONTHLY REPORT

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APPENDIX A: FEDERAL REGISTER SUMMARIES

NOTICES

"Notice of Availability for FY 04 Enforcement and Compliance Assurance Multi-Media Assistance Agreements"

February 18, 2004 (69 FR 7628)

The Office of Compliance, within EPA's Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance, is soliciting proposals for states and tribes to support their on-going efforts in state/tribal data system modernization. In particular, the grants will fund technical assistance and technical expertise for states/tribes to ensure that they will be able to accurately transmit water enforcement and compliance data to EPA. Grants will be in the range of \$50,000 – \$200,000. The total number and amount of the awards will depend on the amount of funds available. Electronic or hard copy proposals must be received by April 12, 2004.

"National Drinking Water Advisory Council: Request for Water Security Working Group Nominations"

February 27, 2004 (69 FR 9312)

EPA announced the formation of the Water Security Working Group of the National Drinking Water Advisory Council and solicited all interested persons to nominate qualified individuals to serve a one-year term. Nominations should be submitted on or before March 29, 2004.

FINAL RULES

"National Primary and Secondary Drinking Water Regulations: Approval of Additional Method for the Detection of Coliforms and E. Coli in Drinking Water"

February 13, 2004 (69 FR 7156)

EPA approved the Colitag™ method to support previously established requirements for National Primary Drinking Water Regulation compliance monitoring for total coliforms and E. coli in finished drinking water. This method was proposed on March 7, 2002, and a Notice of Data Availability was published on December 2, 2002, which provided additional information on the Colitag™ method. This action provides water utilities and certified laboratories an additional analytical method option to test for total coliforms and E. coli. This regulation is effective March 15, 2004.

"Revision to the Texas Underground Injection Control Program Approved Under Section 1422 of the Safe Drinking Water Act and Administered by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality"

February 25, 2004 (69 FR 8565)

EPA is amending the Code of Federal Regulations and incorporating by reference the revised Underground Injection Control Program for the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.

The state submitted changes to the UIC program to EPA for review. EPA is approving and codifying these changes. The effective date for this action is March 26, 2004.

"Revision to the Texas Underground Injection Control Program Approved Under Section 1422 of the Safe Drinking Water Act and Administered by the Railroad Commission of Texas"

February 26, 2004 (69 FR 8824)

EPA is amending the Code of Federal Regulations and incorporating by reference the revised Underground Injection Control Program for Brine Mining Wells implemented by the Railroad Commission of Texas. The effective date for this action is March 29, 2004.